

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY WELCOMES DIRECT LUFTHANSA FLIGHT TO NORTH CAROLINA**  
*Munich and Charlotte Connected by New Non-Stop Option*

**RALEIGH**— Gov. Mike Easley joined Charlotte and Lufthansa officials in welcoming the inaugural Munich-Charlotte direct flight to North Carolina today at the Charlotte Douglass Airport. The new nine-hour flight is expected to increase the already strong ties between North Carolina and German businesses and tourists. The inaugural trip began in Munich, Germany, Friday at 11:10 a.m. local time and arrived in Charlotte at 3:00 p.m.(EST).

“This direct flight opens new doors for Lufthansa in the United States, particularly in the Southeast and in North Carolina,” said Easley. “The flight also provides an excellent opportunity for increased business and tourism travel both ways. North Carolina is home to 155 German-based businesses and more than 300,000 overseas tourists visit our state each year. This flight can only strengthen those numbers.”

North Carolina wasted no time in taking advantage of the new non-stop option. Several members of the state’s 2004 European business development mission boarded the inaugural flight for the return trip to Munich. They will join Commerce Secretary Jim Fain and other departmental staff, who arrived earlier in the week, for rounds of private, face-to-face and larger public business meetings with companies looking to expand in the state, with those who currently have operations here or who might provide new markets for North Carolina products, as well as with tourist operators who annually bring thousands of international tourists to our state.

“It is a pleasure to welcome Charlotte as Lufthansa’s newest North American gateway,” said Thierry Antinori, executive vice president of sales and marketing for Lufthansa. “Together with our future Star Alliance partner US Airways and the North Carolina business and civic communities we will offer our customers a premium connection with Lufthansa -- from Charlotte nonstop to the heart of Europe and one-stop to virtually anywhere in the world.”

Lufthansa offers an extensive network of global connections from its Frankfurt and Munich hubs. The airline serves 330 destinations in nearly 90 countries worldwide.

The decision to locate the new non-stop flight in Charlotte, announced in December 2003, resulted from the work of several groups including the N.C. Department of Commerce, the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, the Charlotte Regional Partnership, Visit Charlotte and Advantage Charlotte.

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